CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 19 May 1994, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. György Boytha (Hungary)

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The PRESIDENT: After our inter-sessional period, I have the honour to declare open the 678th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish, on behalf of the Conference, to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, the Honourable Douglas Graham, who is the first speaker on our list today. As you are aware, the Minister has already addressed the Conference on two previous occasions and his presence among us today testifies to the continued interest of New Zealand in our work.

I also have on the list of speakers for today the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

I give the floor to the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, the Honourable Douglas Graham.

Mr. GRAHAM (New Zealand): It is an honour for me to address the Conference on Disarmament at the opening of the second part of its 1994 session.

When I last addressed this body in January 1993, after attending the chemical weapons Convention signing ceremony in Paris, I commented that, that achievement notwithstanding, the Conference could not afford to rest on its laurels. It seemed to me then that the CD must take advantage of changes in the international situation and pursue with vigour those items on its agenda of fundamental importance to many of us.

By and large, these changes have been beneficial, tilting the balance from totalitarianism to democracy, from confrontation to cooperation. There have been dramatic improvements in States' assessments of their own security and, consequently, new opportunities for progress in disarmament and arms control.

But there is no doubt that there remain some formidable challenges to peace and stability, including in the Asia-Pacific region in which New Zealanders live. Perhaps the most pervasive security concern in the post-cold-war era is the heightened threat of unrestrained arms flows and the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Efforts to achieve the total elimination of chemical and biological weapons, and substantial reductions of conventional weapons, must continue alongside those to secure progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Today, it is very clear that the Conference is, in fact responding to these challenges and has entered a new and important phase of activity. New Zealand welcomes the renewed focus on the nuclear items on its agenda, which are of undiminished relevance. Not only are the negotiations on a CTBT well under way. The Conference has before it the results of the Special Coordinator's views on the "where" and "how" of a cut-off treaty. And there is the prospect of new activity in the important area of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. It is on these subjects that I wish to comment today.

(Mr. Graham, New Zealand)

In doing so, I note that the Conference has very recently heard New Zealand's views on the vital question of conventional arms control, including transparency measures which aim to build confidence and enhance the security of States at the regional and international level. We shall join other States parties in efforts to strengthen the biological weapons Convention through consideration later this year of measures to verify compliance with this treaty. In the lead-up to the review of the inhumane weapons Convention, we shall also be seeking ways to enhance controls over the production, transfer and use of land-mines which have had a devastating impact, in human and economic terms, in every region of the world.

During a period of more than 30 years, a comprehensive ban on all nuclear testing has become almost the Holy Grail of multilateral disarmament. New Zealand's efforts to promote a halt to nuclear testing by all States, in all environments, for all time, are well known. It had long been our belief that the CD has responsibility for negotiating a treaty to secure that objective.

The decision of the Conference in August last year to begin negotiations in 1994 on item 1 of its agenda was therefore greeted with much enthusiasm in New Zealand. The determination of the international community to support this process, vividly conveyed by the passage in the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the first consensus resolution on the subject, has not diminished. Indeed, expectations remain high.

New Zealand wants an effective CTBT concluded in rapid time. We believe that this is an entirely realistic goal given the encouraging progress made during the first part of this session under the energetic leadership of Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico, and the working group chairmen. We are also aware that nearly half of the Conference's meeting time this year is already behind us. In the coming months New Zealand will therefore be working with others to ensure that no time is wasted in putting together a text which meets the desire of the international community for a treaty which provides for a universal, multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive test ban.

I am aware that the design and costing of an effective verification regime is a priority in this regard. I am therefore pleased to be able to confirm that New Zealand's contribution to the elaboration of the seismic core of the treaty's verification package, through our long-time participation in the GSE, is being complemented by a contribution to this week's expert sessions from our experts in the field of radioactivity monitoring, drawing on the experience we have gained in our own region, the South Pacific.

It will be important in the coming months to ensure the best possible atmosphere for these negotiations. New Zealand believes that the nuclear-weapon States can demonstrate their commitment to progress by refraining from further testing. It is pleasing to note recent reaffirmations of that commitment.

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Another measure of the new momentum in the CD this year is the appointment of a Special Coordinator, Canadian Ambassador Gerry Shannon, to conduct consultations on how and where the negotiation of a convention banning the manufacture of fissionable material for weapons purposes could take place. His recent report to the Conference lays the foundation for negotiations. New Zealand shares the view that the early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and effectively verifiable fissile material production ban will be of particular importance in the context of non-proliferation.

There is also a need to respond to international concern about the release of highly enriched uranium and of plutonium as a consequence of the process of nuclear disarmament. Our view is that a ban on further reproduction should be complemented by reliable and transparent mechanisms to manage existing stocks.

At the global level the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty continues to play a crucial role as the primary bulwark against the further spread of nuclear weapons. It is also the framework for facilitating and regulating cooperation among States in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In our view the treaty should continue in force indefinitely after 1995. Attempting to use the treaty's extension as a lever to achieve concessions in other arms control areas, however well intended, is playing with stakes that are simply too high. The NPT is a key factor in the security of us all. It is too important to bargain away. By indefinite extension the international community will send to would-be proliferators the clearest possible signal that their activities are not acceptable.

While it is clear that with 163 parties the NPT is the most successful disarmament treaty ever, it is equally important that efforts continue to promote wider adherence so that the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime enjoys universal support. Indeed, with the welcome announcements by Argentina and Algeria of their intention to accede to the NPT before the 1994 Conference, we are a step closer to achieving this goal.

In this regard, New Zealand also welcomes recent accessions by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Georgia as non-nuclear-weapon States. We are pleased to note the commencement of the transfer of nuclear weapons from the Ukraine to the Russian Federation in accordance with the trilateral agreement reached in January between the United States, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine. It is our hope that the Ukraine will very soon become a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the NPT in fulfilment of its commitments under the Lisbon Protocol.

Full compliance with the NPT and nuclear safeguards agreements is essential to the functioning and strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime. New Zealand looks to the DPRK to meet its safeguards obligations and allay regional and international concern regarding its nuclear programme. We continue to support dialogue as the most desirable approach to resolving this problem, though the international community cannot afford to compromise on the ultimate requirement of adequate IAEA inspections of North Korean nuclear

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facilities. Satisfactory resolution of the issue will open the way to more normal and beneficial relations between North Korea and the countries of the region, something which my Government would support.

Before I leave this subject, let me also say that the generally improved international situation, qualified by the potential threat of proliferation, argues emphatically for the relevance of regional measures such as the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone. We congratulate all those concerned on the progress made towards the conclusion of the drafting of a treaty to create an African nuclear-weapons-free zone. We are equally encouraged by continued progress towards the entry into force for the entire Latin American and Caribbean region of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the accession to its Protocol II of all five nuclear-weapon States. We hope that those nuclear-weapon States which have not adhered to the protocols to the nuclear-free-zone treaty in our own region will soon find themselves able to do so.

The progress we are witnessing on these questions begs another. Is it not now time to begin in earnest the negotiation of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons? The CD's Ad Hoc Committee responsible for this subject has had a negotiating mandate for some years, regrettably without tangible result.

It is New Zealand's view that on legal and moral grounds all countries renouncing the nuclear option in an internationally and legally binding form and acting in full compliance with their obligations have a legitimate right to such assurances. Those recently extended to the Ukraine encourage us in the view that it should be possible in the new international climate to find a formula acceptable to all that could be included in an international instrument of a legally binding character. Naturally such an agreement will have to be based on mutual obligations by both nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States. We therefore believe that the multilateral framework provided by the CD offers the best environment for such negotiations.

Members of this Conference would be surprised if I did not now turn to another subject of particular interest to my country and, I expect, at least 22 others. New Zealand continues to hold firmly to the view that a sizeable and balanced expansion of its membership is required if the Conference is to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to it by the international community.

When I addressed the opening meeting of the Conference in 1993 I put the case for an expansion which would take in all those countries wanting to contribute their perspective and resources to meeting the new security challenges of the 1990s and the twenty-first century. Many continue to share that preference.

(Mr. Graham, New Zealand)

The intensive consultations conducted by Australian Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan in the following months convinced him, however, that such an option was not capable of attracting the support of all member States. The list he tabled in August last year therefore contained 23 new members, including New Zealand. It came so close to adoption that, I confess, we nearly drew the cork from the champagne bottle.

It was a great disappointment to my Government that the Conference was then, and still is unable to reach consensus on the fundamental question of its own composition.

While appreciative of the efforts that successive CD Presidents have since made to resolve this matter, and we welcome the appointment of a Friend of the Chair on this subject, Ambassador Lampreia of Brazil, I have to say that the Conference is causing a serious dilemma for countries such as my own. We want to play a full part in the CTBT negotiations and in all future negotiations undertaken by this body. We commit the resources necessary, both in terms of the contribution we make here in Geneva as a non-member delegation, and as a fully up-to-date fee-paying member of the United Nations which, as we all know, funds the CD.

I therefore urge the Conference to return to the proposal on the table and make determined efforts to secure its adoption. I am certain that the benefits of an early expansion will not be felt only by the new members, but will influence in a very positive way the effectiveness of the international community's single multilateral negotiating body.

Finally, Mr. President, in wishing you and your successors success in the many tasks before the Conference this year, let me also assure you of New Zealand's continuing commitment to its work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand for his important and comprehensive statement and for his good wishes addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ambassador Calovski.

Mr. CALOVSKI (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Mr. President, first I would like to join you in welcoming His Excellency the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, the Honourable Douglas Graham, for his important and very interesting statement.

Mr. President, may I, at the outset, express my delegation's satisfaction at your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament? I am sure that the Conference will be pleased with the deliberations under your presidency. You can count on my delegation's full support and cooperation. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky on his very important duty, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. I am sure that the Conference will benefit from his

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wealth of experience and diplomatic skill. We are very pleased to see the new Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail, whose competence and devotion to the work of the Conference on Disarmament is very well known to all of us present here.

The impression of my delegation is that the Conference is proceeding with its work satisfactorily and one hopes that it would end up this year's deliberations with important results both from the point of view of its mandate as a negotiating body on disarmament but also from the point of view of the nature of its functions and deliberations - an important international forum which should positively influence the efforts of the international community aimed at the strengthening of international security. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like to mention the important and imaginative contribution of Mr. Gérard Errera, distinguished Ambassador of France, who succeeded in directing this year's session of the Conference towards useful and workable deliberations. That was possible because of the readiness and the ability of other participants to see the Conference continue with the productive experience gained when it succeeded in concluding the most important work of its negotiations so far - the chemical weapons Convention.

In the rich discussion at the plenary meetings of the CD and elsewhere so far we have noted the efforts of the participants to come up with workable suggestions which could be universally acceptable and we have also noted the echo of the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, to this Conference in which he emphasized that the end of bipolarity had not diminished, but rather increased the need for disarmament and that the disarmament process should be seen as an integral part of preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building. So, from our point of view the CD is faced with an important task, to come up at the end of this year's deliberations with concrete results of the negotiations on very important instruments, which is also very important to positively influence the international efforts and the behaviour of all States towards achieving a better international security situation. We hope the CD will manage to do so. The quality of the results will depend on the readiness to sincerely respect international law, the principles and the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and to pursue international relations based on common interest, partnerships and mutual respect.

To my delegation the deliberations of the CD on all items of this year's agenda are very important. We would like to note with satisfaction the competence of the elected chairmen of the established committees. It is not, however, a surprise that the CD has shown the greatest interest in the work of the Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, chaired by the so much devoted diplomat to the cause of prohibiting all possible nuclear tests, the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico, Mr. Marín Bosch. He has our full support.

Mr. President, from what I have said so far you could have noticed that my delegation is of the view that the process of disarmament can be useful and beneficial for the strengthening of international security and the improvement of international relations if it takes fully into account that negotiation of

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an instrument has to achieve and serve global, regional and national purpose. The strength of the negotiated instrument will depend on the acceptability by all, recognizing that all States are equally interested, but that each State has its own preference. This is why the negotiations are usually very complex and why the consensus is not so easily reached. The huge difficulty which should be overcome in the process of negotiations is the question of confidence in the policy of other States which, we have to recognize that fact, is lacking at present; then the attempts to achieve something on the account of others which should not be permitted; and the behaviour to gain positions on the basis of strength which is contrary to international law.

My country, the Republic of Macedonia, attaches the greatest importance to the development of good-neighbourly relations and considers them most important generator for peace, security, cooperation and disarmament in our region, in Europe and also globally. By stressing the importance of this deterrent against all possible non-peaceful activities, we do not, of course, wish to undermine the importance of other factors favouring peace, security and development. But every day we are faced with invented, false examples of deeds and behaviour in international relations which are seriously threatening the peaceful development in the region of our country. To stop this unhealthy politics the international community must insist on the full observance of international law, should not allow unilateral actions in contradiction with purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and should take an active position against the breaches of international law.

It is true that in the period after the cold war we have entered unprepared, with so many wishes and expectations. The threat of the third world war with the use of nuclear armaments has been diminished, but many countries, as you all know, are continuing to be faced with the reality that they have to struggle daily with problems of their international security and the peaceful development of their region. Is the international community prepared and able to stop the present unhealthy developments in international relations? The answer should be of course a positive one. And there lies the problem, particularly from the point of view of countries like mine - the answer is always positive but the practice is full of negative developments. It is not enough to stress that we are entering the twenty-first century with a new world order. The most important is our attitude towards the international obligation, the character of our concrete behaviour and activities and, of course, our contribution towards the aim of sustainable peaceful development of international relations.

The example of my country in the process of acquiring its independence is characteristic from many points of view. We have invested huge efforts to acquire our independence peacefully, without a war, and to strengthen it with the development of international policy strictly in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. We have succeeded in that. If we had not succeeded, the international community, Europe would have been faced with a Balkan war much more tragic than one in Bosnia and Herzegovina that is unfortunately still going on in spite of so many efforts to stop it. The international community supported our platform, our policy of gaining our independence peacefully. My country

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became a member of the United Nations and of other international organizations, we have established diplomatic relations with many countries, we have United Nations and United States peace-keeping forces with preventive functions and so on. All this in spite of constant, imaginable and elaborate obstacles by one of our neighbours which regretfully continues with its negative policy towards my country. The Government of Greece on 16 February 1994 decided to establish a full political and economic blockade against my country, the Republic of Macedonia, with the aim to destabilize it, thus endangering international peace and security in our region, in contradiction with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and many instruments of the CSCE including the Final Act of Helsinki and the Paris Charter. For this act the Government of Greece has been universally condemned by practically all countries including all 11 members of the European Union and by the United States. The European Union has instituted legal proceedings against Greece in the European Court. The right of land-locked countries to access to the sea, so many times reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations, has been violated and denied to my country by the Government of Greece. Can you imagine, Mr. President, what would have been the reaction in Europe if, for example, a similar decision as that of the Government of Greece of 16 February 1994 would have been taken by the Government of Italy, France or Germany against Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia or the Czech Republic as land-locked countries? Can Italy, France or Germany deny the right of access to the sea to Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia or the Czech Republic? Of course, they cannot and I am sure they will not. Then why has the Government of Greece been allowed to make such a brutal breach of international law? This precedent signals alarm for concern and should not be permitted to last. The international community has a duty to influence the Greek Government to annul without delay its decision of 16 February 1994 against my country.

We hope that the international community will continue to support our peaceful policy and that present difficulties created against us by our southern neighbour will soon disappear. Our policy as a European developing country in transition aims at our complete integration in Europe as soon as possible and development of good-neighbourly relations with all our neighbours. Of course with Greece too. Sooner or later we are bound to have good relations with Greece. We are ready to enter that period without further delay.

Since I am speaking about international peace and security, I would like to take this opportunity to stress that it is high time that all States should sincerely accept the so many times reaffirmed principle of interdependence and the policy to observe mutual interest, respect and partnership in international relations. Our resolute position against aggressions, against violations of human rights, against poverty, should be also very firm, against violations of the principle of interdependence and of mutual respect. That can be to a larger extent achieved by undertaking preventive and confidence-building measures in all fields of international cooperation.

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It was in view of the current international political situation, very mature, that the CD decided to begin its work immediately on a nuclear test ban, prevention of an arms race in outer space, effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and transparency in armaments. This was a very good answer to those that have expressed the opinion that the CD has reached the end of its usefulness after it completed the negotiation of the chemical Convention.

We share the position that all energy and negotiating skills should be employed in achieving agreement on the prohibition of nuclear tests, agreement which could be supported equally by nuclear and non-nuclear States, by big and small States. Most countries have no ambitions to become nuclear Powers but they accept the position that nuclear weapons are extremely dangerous, that they are a permanent threat to international security and that the best way to uphold non-proliferation is to ban all possible nuclear tests. We are aware of what is at stake and how complex it is to achieve a universally acceptable and verifiable nuclear-test-ban agreement which will annul the danger of nuclear war and will not pose obstacles to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The agreement should take fully into account the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the interest of all nations, big or small, developed or developing. In any case it would be a political agreement since it requires a political will and commitment to be achieved. Thus, it should be major instrument in strengthening international relations and a hope for better future of mankind.

The discussions so far in the CD and elsewhere once again confirm that peace and security are not threatened only by nuclear or chemical weapons. It is threatened by conventional weapons, much more than one can realize. We need no research to discover this. We see it every day on our television screen. The deliberations of the CD on transparency in armaments should lead the international community to conclude that an order in that field can be of great benefit to the efforts to improve the international political situation and to help finding solutions to so many war conflicts all over the world. The fact is that it is not necessary to have atomic bombs in order to frighten neighbouring countries. Modern conventional weapons are enough, particularly in our region. It is also a fact that it is not difficult to ascertain how much weaponry a country needs for legitimate purposes. But if a country accumulates huge quantities of conventional weapons, more than is reasonable, one should normally become worried. The rational policy which the CD in such a situation should advocate should be the development of good-neighbourly relations instead of an arms race in conventional weapons. I am saying this because the accumulation of conventional weapons in our region is something that the international community should be very much concerned with. Strengthening collective security could be one important answer to the need to stop the arms race in conventional weapons. We are witnessing dynamic efforts in various parts of the world, particularly in Europe, to see the collective security arrangement adapt itself to the new political reality. As we all know NATO is going through this process of transformation and one hopes that this will strengthen the power and dynamics of the forces for peace and

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cooperation. The quality of the results will very much depend upon the readiness to uphold the vision that our future lies not in the arms race but in cooperation based on an equal footing.

The General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-eighth session adopted without a vote resolution 48/84B on the development of good-neighbourly relations among Balkan States. Affirming its determination that all nations should live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, the General Assembly emphasized the urgency of the consolidation of the Balkans as a region of peace, security, stability and good-neighbourliness, thus contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security and so enhancing the prospects for sustained development and prosperity for its peoples. Because of this attitude of the General Assembly this resolution was called the resolution of hope for the Balkans. By this resolution, the General Assembly, via the Secretary-General, requested, inter alia, of international organizations, as well as the competent organs of the United Nations, their views on the development of good-neighbourly relations in the Balkan region and on the measures and preventive activities aimed at creation of a stable zone of peace and cooperation in the Balkans by the year 2000. The report of the Secretary-General requested by this resolution will be discussed by the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. It goes without saying that the contribution of the CD on this subject will be very valuable and very important indeed. At present, we are witnessing many activities to stop the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to promote peaceful alternatives. They deserve our full support. However, the international community should tackle this situation with greater vision, should see the forest instead of trees. Balkan States, with help and the necessary push by the international community, should start developing good-neighbourly relations among themselves. All other avenues will lead to more wars and confrontations which should not be allowed. The Balkans has gained the reputation as a region that permanently threatens international peace and security. We are firmly convinced that it is possible for the Balkans to become a zone of peace and development. My country will do its utmost to see in the future that kind of Balkans.

Before I finish my statement I would like to make a brief comment on the question of the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. Although regrettable it was not unexpected that the CD was not able to achieve consensus on the expansion of its membership. The Republic of Macedonia, as a successor State of former Yugoslavia, is very much interested in the resolution of this question. Like Croatia and Slovenia, we too are interested in membership. In our opinion, the CD should first resolve the dilemma whether it is realistic to continue to seek consensus on the expansion or whether it is perhaps better to try a new formula so that the CD could become a truly universal forum. Since we are seeking to conclude universally acceptable instruments it is worthwhile to try to solve the problem on that basis. Of course, it is easier to negotiate between two partners but since

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the negotiations on such instruments as the ban on chemical weapons or the ban on nuclear tests, which as such are deterrents in favour of peace, why not try another avenue which will enable all interested States to participate in the negotiations? This would strengthen the confidence and the collective responsibility from which all States would benefit.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished delegate of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. May I ask if any other delegate wishes to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

May I now turn to the informal paper circulated by the secretariat, containing the timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies for next week? This timetable has been prepared in consultation with the chairmen of the ad hoc committees. As usual, it is merely indicative and may be changed according to actual needs, if necessary. On that understanding, I suggest that we adopt it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes our business for today. Does any delegation wish to take the floor at this stage? I see no request for the floor, so I intend to adjourn this plenary meeting.

Before adjourning this meeting I wish to remind you that it will be immediately followed by a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban here in this room. Therefore, those who are participating in the deliberations of this Ad Hoc Committee should stay in the room.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 26 May 1994 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.